

MERCATOR:

O R,

Commerce Retrieved,

BEING

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Tuesday, February 16. to Thursday, February 18. 1713.

Of the scandalous Method of continuing to Expose us to all Nations, as if we were in terrible Apprehensions of them on every occasion, and dare not do Ourselves Right, lest they should stop our Trade.

This only an Artifice of Foreigners to Impose upon us at home, and Expose us abroad.

The Dutch are privately Dictators in all these things.

The Wisdom and Honesty also of telling publickly to the Portuguese, that we get a Million a Year by them.

A notorious Falshood published by the Opposers, (viz.) That we had no Ballance from Portugal before the War.

The Treaty of Commerce with France will be very little or no Obstruction to the Trade to Portugal.

A view of our Exportations to France and to Spain.

THE *MERCATOR* is now to Discourse seriously of the True state of things between the King of Portugal and us, and more especially of the State of the Trade between the Two Nations; which was the Third part of the Question mentioned before to be spoken to.

We complain'd in our last, of the abhorred Method, which the Opposers of the Treaty of Commerce take to support their Argument, viz. (1.) To depreciate and undervalue the Manufactures of their own Country, and extol the French Woollen Manufactures, as equal in Goodness and lower in Price than Our own; And, (2.) To lay us open to all Nations to Insult and Impose upon us, Representing us as in so great Apprehensions of their Prohibiting our Trade, that they may Insult us, upon the supposition of it, in what manner they please.

The scribbling Knight, who has plac'd himself at the head of the Mob of Authors against the Treaty of Commerce, bids them suggest the Loss of all our Portugal Trade to us, if we dare to provoke the formidable Portuguese to Quarrel with us, and Prohibit our Manufactures, and that we shall lose a Million a Year by it.

But let that Foreigner know, that it is a much readier way to make the Portuguese Impose us by Prohibiting our Trade, or any other way to Insult us, when we ourselves shall perswade them, that we get a Million a Year by Trading with them: That we are in great Apprehensions lest they should Prohibit Trade with us, and that we dare not make good our Treaty with France for fear, of Disobliging them. Is this to Talk for our Country? Is this Pleading for the Honour of our Commerce and the Interest of the Nation? Are not these Men Traytors to their Country, and Betrayers of its Prosperity?

The *MERCATOR* desires to lay this before the Parliament, who are now Assembled; it is for them to consider, whether their Right of levying and laying Taxes is not Invaded by the Portugal Treaty; and to

Vindicate their own Privileges to the Shame and the Punishment of all those, who Invade them. If the People, who have made such a Treaty, dare appear and justify it; If they will say, they could make an Article, that was inconsistent with Parliamentary Privilege, and be justified in it; If they will say, that a Minister of State can, by his particular Stipulation, tie up the Hands of the Parliament of Britain, and dictate to them, what Taxes they shall, or shall not Raise upon such or such Goods, and that the Parliament shall be bound by it; we shall soon see, who are Betrayers of their Country, and who not; and how a Parliament will Resent such an apparent Breach made upon them, and whether they will Resent it or no.

In the mean time, if we are to be set together by the Ears by Foreigners; if we are to Sacrifice one Branch of Trade to another, and all our Trade to our Parties; the Case of this Nation is miserable: We are sold to the projecting Politicians, and whatever they put into our Mouths, that we say, and what one Sett of Men say, that all of the Party believe. And this is the Case of England, and indeed of all Britain, at this time. The Dutch Interest in our Trade is plain: The Dutch may be as much Friends to our Civil Interests, our Interest as Protestants and as Neighbours, as ye please; The *MERCATOR* enters not into that Dispute; but no Men of Sense and Zeal for their Countries Good will say, the Dutch are our best Friends in Trade; if they will say so, when we hear it, the *MERCATOR* will have more to say to it.

That the Dutch are many ways our Rivals in Trade, that they are jealous of us in several Cases, wherein our Commerce Clashes and Interferes with theirs, that we are in many Cases of Trade, dangerous Rivals to them abroad, and desire still to be so, is most certain; and it is our Business to be more and more so.

But that any Party-Interest here should so far move us to let, in favour of the Dutch, as to let the Dutch in upon us in Trade, or to give up our Trading Interests to them in any thing; this is the highth not of Folly only, but of Treachery and Knavery.

We

We know it is the Interest of the Dutch, that we should not have a free open Trade with France: We know, that the Arguments put into the Mouths of our People against the Trade with France, *ARE ALL DUTCH*; Coin'd in Holland, Calculated for a Dutch Interest; and that it is their Interest our Parties are pushing in it. It is true, the Portugal Traders are dup'd and drawn into the Clamour with the especial Argument of their Advantage, as if their particular Concern was equal to the whole French Trade.

Supposing they are Gainers by the Commerce with Portugal, do they drive a Trade so considerable, that it must be set against an Export of Seven or eight hundred Thousand Pounds a Year?

As to the pretence of losing the Portugal Trade, and the Portuguese Prohibiting our Goods, and losing a Million a Year, it was Argued before in a manner, which they can never Reply to. Take an Abridgment of it again thus:

They say, we Export a Million per Ann. to Portugal in a Year in our Manufactures.

They cannot pretend, that all the Wines we Import from Portugal in a Year amount to 100000 l. first Cost.

Do the Portuguese take this Million a Year of us in Goods, because we take one Tenth part of it from them in Wines, or is it because they have occasion for our Goods?

Nay, it cannot be denied, that we shall not sink the whole Quantity of those Wines after this Treaty is made Effectual: The *MERCATOR* gave good Reasons to believe, that we shall not sink above 2000 Ton a Year in our Demands of their Wines, because of our having run into a Course of strong Wines, and because of the use of the Portugal Wines to mix with the French.

Well! then the Portuguese be so enraged at our taking Two Thousand Ton of Wine of them less than we used to take, as that they will desist taking a Million a Year of our Goods, for our abating 20 or 30 Thousand Pound of theirs!

Is the Portugal Trade so oddly stated, that the lesser part shall Govern the greater? Does our selling a Million a Year to them depend upon their selling 50000 l. to us?

To go back to the Reason of the Trade: Let them examine back into the Times before the War, and see, how many Goods did the Portuguese take from us, when we Imported from them not above 300 or 400 Ton of Wine a Year, and when the Duties of their Wines were higher than the Duties on French Wines by 7 l. odd Money per Ton, yet even then we Exported a very great Quantity of English Goods to Portugal, even as many, take the proportion of their Brazil Trade into the Consideration, as it was then, as we do now. It is a Testimony of gross Ignorance, or something very much worse, that an Author should assert in print, that we had the Ballance of Trade against Portugal before the War; it is indeed a sign, that these Men will stick at nothing, will affirm any Falshood to make out their broken Argument. It is certain, we had always a great Ballance on our Side in the Portugal Trade, as the Custom-house Books will make appear; and the *MERCATOR* wonders his Worship can dictate such a palpable Falshood to his new Pupil the Lawyer; if he can prove it to be as he says, let him, if not, he may expect to be told of it again.

Nor is the Encrease of their demand of English Goods now, owing to the Encrease of our demand for their Wines, but to the prodigious Encrease of the Wealth of the Portuguese Nation at home, and of their Brazil Trade abroad.

Perhaps they may have gotten Money too by the Encrease of their Wine Trade, and every little addition of Wealth encreases their Consumption of our Goods for Cloathing, &c. among them, that is true; but what Proportion can that encrease of Wealth bear to the Growth of their Brazil Trade, and the Return of Gold which they now bring, of which within 30 Year past they had nothing at all, or nothing worth naming; whereas if the printed Accounts were true, their last Fleet from Brasil must have brought them above 10 Millions Sterling in Specie of Gold, a Sum we have

Reason to Question, it is confessed; but that it was an immense Sum, that every one must allow.

Now that this Encrease of the Brasil Trade has enrich'd the whole Kingdom of Portugal is *True*; that the great Encrease of the Consumption of our Woollen Manufactures in Portugal is occasion'd hereby is *also True*, and that a vast Quantity of those Goods are Consumed in the Brasil, more than ever were before, is without Disputing acknowledg'd.

Can any one pretend then, that this Demand depends upon our taking their Wines! The Supposition is absurd and ridiculous, and it is easie to make appear, that the Portuguese have as great a Necessity to Trade with us, as we have to Trade with them, and in the General, get as much Money by us, as we do by them, as shall be more largely made out in the next *MERCATOR*.

The Opposers of the Commerce having attack'd, not only our Trade to France, but also that to Spain, and continuing to insist, that we loose by our Trade to Spain, the *MERCATOR* cannot but think it very useful to the Information of our People, that they should now and then see, what a Stream of our Manufactures, and other Goods, actually flow out every Day both to Spain and to France; from whence they may observe,

1. *Of the Trade to Spain*; what a Trade it is they undervalue and would have had still prohibited by continuing the War.

2. *Of the Trade to France*; what a Trade it now is even in spite of the Interruptions of high Duties equal to Prohibitions, and what a Trade it would be, if the Rage of Parties did not interrupt it, and if the making the Treaty of Commerce Effectual had not been unhappily delay'd, for both which, the *MERCATOR* refers to the following Accounts from the Custom-House.

From the Custom-House.

Five Days Entries to Spain.

122 Long Cloths
25 Short Cloths
300 Double Bays
70 Minikin Bays
* 30 Yorkshire Cloths
* 55 Kerfies
661 Perpets and Serges
631 Stuffs and Says
80 doz. Hose
104 Groce Gartering
20 doz. Hats
22 Ton 5 C. Red Lead
70 Fod. 5 C. Lead
165 Perpets and Serges
* 200 Stuffs and Says
* 60 Castors
* 228 Callicoes
7 Ton 14 C. Ginger

From the Custom-house.

Two Days Entries to France, Feb. 8. 12.

* 24 doz. Calve-Skins
1 C. Books
3 Bales Apparel
39 Bags Cotton Wooll
12763 l. Cotton Wooll
27 Fod. 18 C. Lead
5 Ton Lethrige Lead
5 Ton Red Lead
5100 Horn Plates
* 300 Firkins Butter
6 Ton Black Tin
360 qr. Barley
50 Barrels Salmon
30 Ton 5 C. Braziletto
4 Ton Logwood
10 Ton Fustick
16 l. Tea
140 Gal. Canary
850 l. Pimento
39605 l. Virginia Tobacco